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O F T H E
E S T I M A T E,

On that Part of his
EXPLANATORY DEFENCE

Which relates to the
UNIVERSITIES.

The proper Use of *Ridicule* is to disgrace known *Falshood*,
— or *Folly* — and chiefly, I think, *Affectation*.

Essays on the Characteristics, p. 103.



L O N D O N:

Printed for J. PRIDDEN, at the *Feathers*, near
Fleet-Bridge, Fleet-Street. 1758.

A
LETTER

TO THE

AUTHOR

OF THE

ESTIMATE

ON THE

EXPLANATORY DEFENCE

OF THE

UNIVERSITY

101

The paper of the University of Cambridge is to be known by the

name of the University of Cambridge

and is to be known by the





TO THE
AUTHOR *of the* ESTIMATE.

S I R,

Mincing-lane, 29th June, 1758.



AFTER all the trouble you have taken to make yourself understood, you will think it a little hard, that any person should yet be so dull, as not to apprehend your meaning. For, be assur'd, I am not one of those, who would misapply or pervert it, either thro' carelessness, or by design. Very few of your numerous adversaries have shewn a proper regard to your

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character, either as a clergyman, a scholar, or a gentleman. I therefore did not expect they would have been compar'd to *Hornets*, nature having given that race, of animals, as far as we can collect from their actions, great generosity and nobleness of temper; great power to hurt, without the least inclination to exert it, excepting in the necessary occasions of self-defence. If *Wasps* would have been too trite an allusion, perhaps a nest of *Ants* might have furnish'd the illustration you wanted. Their creeping, groveling disposition, their selfish and thievish industry, the little dirty trade, which they carry on, the acrimony with which they conspire to annoy every creature that offers to interrupt it; are qualities, which all seem to meet in the *Author-race* you complain of. Every *grain* of merit which they take from you, is esteem'd an addition to their own Stock. In short, I know of little difference between the two species, excepting that the one lives in a *ground-floor*, and the other in a *garret*.

You will pardon me for taking this small liberty with the language of your work. I was only afraid lest the allusion you chose should

should seem to dignify the objects you design'd to degrade. 'Tis true there are many observations in the course of your two volumes concerning the justness of which I am not perfectly satisfied, and of which I believe no notice has yet been taken: however, I shall not trouble you with my objections to them, as they seem to be, many of them, such points, in which either of us may be mistaken with very little harm to ourselves, or others. Neither shall I presume to meddle with any part of your late *Defence*, excepting that which relates to the *Universities*. 'Tis true, I cannot hear of any *Member* who has discover'd more truth in the rest of your remarks, than in those you have so generously retracted. Yet certainly if they had been true, or had carried but the smallest appearance of truth, some of them would have been impartial enough to see, and ingenuous enough to own it. Their silence, indeed, may be thought to import the contrary, but it is clear to me, that they are all either too idle, or too busy to defend themselves, or else too polite to contradict you.

You begin your apology to the Universities with professing your great regard for the welfare of them. Nor could you give them stronger proofs of it than by pointing out their *defects*, and the methods of redressing them. Their *Excellencies* will speak for themselves, or if they would not, the nature of your design did not allow you to enlarge upon *these*. The right you claim to deliver your thoughts upon any subject, which concerns the welfare of mankind, cannot be contested in a *free* country. You might have set larger bounds to your literary jurisdiction, as you not only talk to the *nation*, but to the *age* you live in; nay, to *all* the *ages* in which the *Estimate* shall live. But then, should it chance to contain any false facts, or false conclusions, you are much too just and impartial to wish the same immortality to *them*. For if they survive the present age, the possible ignorance of future generations in the characters of former periods, may prevent their ever being detected. But for this apprehension, I should not have ventur'd to declare my dissent in the articles relating to the *Universities*, all of which I take to be wrong. If I am not a member
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myself, yet am I happy in the opportunities of conversing with those who are. And from all I can learn concerning either the past, or present state of them, there is room to deprecate as a most sinister event, what you recommend as a salutary alteration. So very wide are your sentiments and mine as to the *original purpose of College-government*, which it seems was not *recollected or attended to* by the persons, whose conduct was the object of your enquiry. I do not say *censure*, because the *growing attentions* you *once* observ'd, not having *shot up* to the dangerous heights you apprehended they would have done, there now remain nothing to alarm you, but the abovementioned *inattentions*; which though, in their cause and origin, they do not imply any share of *moral guilt*, or *intentional wrong*, or *positive Demerit*, may, (you think) in their consequences, prove just as hurtful as if they did. You do not question the *legal and statutable administration*, of which they are certainly the rightful, and I believe the faithful guardians. What then is the object of your desire? For, I am sure, as you have taken so much pains to exculpate them, they will be ready to gratify it in any
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reasonable way. It is only this, that they would remedy that *defective form of College-government*, which you have discover'd, by that *voluntary care and superintendency*, to which you believe they are not oblig'd by statute: *i. e.* that they would make it a part of their business, though it is not a part of their duty, to instruct the Tutors; that in the province of instruction, the just subordination which you say is wanting, may be established; that there may be a perfect and regular gradation from the highest to the lowest point of the scale; while you instruct *them*, and they the Tutors, and these the Pupils, & *sic deinceps*, down to the very Scouts and Scullions. Your illustration taken from the state of the public Schools, which you set up as models for the Colleges, I cannot comprehend. For what are Tutors and Sub-tutors but different Instructors, equally *subordinate* with those of schools, and as much *superior* to them, as the Sciences are to the Languages? Are there not public and private Tutors, besides various Lecturers in the various branches of Science? If these are qualified as they ought to be, and as there is good ground to think they *are*, what more can

can be required? What more could be wish'd? For my part, I can think of no other regular and necessary subordination in such societies, besides that of *governors, instructors, and learners*; and such a division always did, and always will subsist as long as those societies have any existence.

The grievance then is reduced to these instances of omission, *viz.* that the *governors* do neither assume nor exercise more power than the Statutes give them; that they do not take upon them more care and trouble than their rank and office require; that they do not consider the *Tutors* as being, with respect to *them*, what the *age* is consider'd with respect to you, *in statu pupillari*. I am ready to grant, that from *your* authority no danger can accrue, both because it was assum'd on right motives, and will be employ'd in a right manner. But I dare not promise as much in favour of any other claimant. Or if I durst, yet the very best use of illegal, or irregular claims, would be attended with bad consequences: for instance, if any of the first order should descend from the office of *governing* to that of *instructing*, any of the second, forsaking their humblest sphere,

sphere, might, with as good a right, aspire
 to a share in the *government*. But tho',
 against all probability, it should so fall out,
 that each was better qualified for the part he
 affected, than that which properly belong'd to
 him, yet even in this case 'tis ten to one that
 neither succeeded. The noblest and most
 disinterested measures of the one would be
 thought to favour of tyranny or ambition,
 the finest and sublimest lectures of the other,
 of meanness and pusillanimity. And in-
 deed there would be reason to apprehend,
 that such an unnatural interference of the
 several classes, and such a breaking in of one
 rank upon another, would terminate either
 in tyranny and oppression, or in confusion
 and anarchy.

I have farther reasons for wishing those
 of the *first order* exempted from the new
 burdens which you would lay upon them.
 Some of them, who once figured in the lists
 of learning, are now not quite in their
 prime and vigour. But you will say, that
 as many as are conscious of any decay, are
 necessarily excepted in your scheme. Alas,
 Sir, a thousand symptoms of decay may
 shew themselves, without one mark of any
 such

such consciousness! The very injury our faculties have received often renders us happily insensible of our worst misfortune. The love of *power* may chance to survive the ability to *manage* it. I am not speaking of absolute and total incapacity, of which the instances are very rare. But if certain defects *natural* to old age should chance to generate certain defects *incidental* to College-government, the next in authority are bound to supply them by *their care and superintendency*, not extorted, or usurp'd, but exercis'd by the consent, or at the desire, of the governors themselves. If they should not chuse to delegate their authority, or part with the power of governing ill, Heaven forbid they should be invested with the additional one of instructing the Tutors! While they keep to their departments, and enjoin nothing illegal, or pernicious, tho' it should happen to be somewhat wrong or absurd, they must be obey'd. Compassion is due to their infirmities, submission to their office, and reverence to their years. But the privilege which you grant to one, you cannot deny to another. For by whom should such invidious distinctions be made, or by whom submitted to? The differences

in regard to years, as being fix'd and certain, might easily be computed ; but those which respected the capacity for teaching, as depending on a great variety of accidents and circumstances, might never be agreed on.

But besides these general considerations, taken from the age and infirmities of some among the first order, for whom repose and tranquillity must be much fitter, than the arduous task of sovereign Tutorship ; I think that particular reasons may be discern'd, why the defects which you suppose, should not be obviated in the manner you advise. For, I am assur'd, that the most superficial observer may discern, and that the most candid must acknowledge, that those who *govern*, are frequently chosen through *foreign influence*, and on account of *political connexions* ; whereas those who *instruct*, are almost always recommended by their own *acquirements*, and singled out on account of *literary merit*.

Now from this essential and important difference in the *Choice*, from which we may in some sort estimate the *qualifications* of each, I cannot help deducing conclusions quite

quite opposite to your theory. Never may we behold the day, when those unhappy contests, with which your University was torn and harraſs'd, ſhall again ſubſiſt! But what can contribute to revive them more, then the *voluntary* exertion of that ſame encroaching, officious, intermeddling ſpirit, which firſt gave them birth? No paſt *attentions* or preſent *inattentions* of the kind which have fallen under your diſpleaſure, will ever be attended with a thouſandth part of the miſchiefs, which an immoderate love of power, and an undue exerciſe of it, did actually produce at a certain period not very diſtant, and would probably produce again, if ever the ſame ſpirit ſhould appear. For ſurely the manners and principles of the University are not yet ſo totally abſorb'd in views of preferment, or ſunk in the general depravity, as that any acts of oppreſſion, or uſurpation would be endur'd, which future periods, or adminiſtrations, might poſſibly produce. For in the preſent, it is not at all likely, that another triumvirate will ariſe, capable of deceiving one of the beſt and greateſt Patrons, who will ſtand recorded in its annals. Yet ſtill every ſemblance of encroachment has a tendency to create jealousies, and

kindle animosities. Every shadow of the Dictatorship will alarm those, who wish well to the republic of learning. For each extension of law, and each stretch of authority, would furnish dangerous precedents, and tempt others to set up like claims, and arrogate to themselves like privileges, till all equal government was abolish'd.

I am as far from believing the College-institutions are perfect, as you can be. If it depended on *my* wish, many things would be expung'd, many alter'd, and some inserted in the Statutes, provided there was no danger from such innovations. Laws should ever have some regard to the ruling manners and principles, which you have so well delineated, and which in distant periods must needs be very different from what they are in the present. Time itself is a sort of Legislator, nor should any laws be suffer'd to keep possession longer, than they can shew (what some perhaps never could shew) their original title to it, *viz.* Utility or Expediency. As it is necessary to have a *new suit* of Cloaths once in a year, perhaps it may be necessary to have a *new set* of Statutes once in an age. Neither will wear for ever.

ever. But then, these *old rags* of legislative wisdom, which time hath consecrated, can neither be flung away till you are sure of a *better garb*, nor patch'd up and adapted to the present mode without the skill of a *Master-workman*. And well it would be, if ambition herself, disguis'd under some such *form*, couchant, and cross-legg'd, with the ensign of mensuration at her elbow, were not employ'd in cutting, and shaping it to her own taste ! I doubt you will think my metaphor is threadbare already ; but I have another ugly suspicion which hangs upon me, and which I cannot express without a figure. What if, before the *old Habit* was fairly worn out, a *new one* should be imported by some worthless *Regulation-Factor* ? A *new one* did I call it ? the *tawdry, tarnish'd, flimsy, flung-off* thing ! more contemptible and ridiculous than any *rag Monmouth-street* could have furnish'd ;—poor *Alma Mater*, and was this thy *Robe of Royalty* !—*Wear it you must ! Refuse it at your peril !*—But thanks to the sagacious Moths, and its own propensity to rottenness ! it is now no more !

But

But to return to our former chat. If it is agreed then, that some laws were never salutary, and that others have ceas'd to be so, for the reasons above, I would not wish them abrogated in form, but neither would I wish them to be executed. What should hinder them from sleeping as peaceably, and as fast, as weak, perhaps, yet worthy Authors? When a man is grown useless to the world, the least he can do is to be quiet; this negative service of abstaining from mischief, is still *expected* at his hands. If not *render'd*, I would tie them up, by my own good will, and so I would do by the laws which are like him, were I the guardian of them. And this, I believe, is usually done, by common consent, with regard to such parts of the College-institutions, as are really defective.

The death of every such ordinance was well express'd by the *Latins*, *In desuetudinem abiit* *. A gentle exit is ever the best in such cases.

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* The unlearned Reader may want to be told, that this kind of Death did actually happen to the famous Regulations.

Had the Governors of Colleges been transformed into *Arch-pedagogues*, and the Tutors into *overgrown School-boys*, during the *superintendency* of a late Provost, who can answer what might have happen'd in the rage of Discipline? For, if the *spirit* of flagellation was habitual to one Ruler, who knows but the *habit* might have been transfus'd into all the rest? But you will think I trifle. In truth, Sir, the idea of birch in such hands, and so employ'd, is not more unnatural or ridiculous, than the thought of Tutors instructed by their respective Principals. The readiness of the former to ask, or of the latter to give advice, where there is any occasion for either, or where either can be done with any propriety, no one ever doubted. If the College-institutions did not suppose, or enjoin it, common sense would. For a number of learned men to live together without some communication of thoughts and councils, would be no way natural. But still, their several provinces of rule are kept distinct. Some offences are too great to fall under the cognizance of the Tutor, whose warmth in the service of his Pupil, might warp his judgment, and lead him

him to misconstrue the Statutes. Others are too minute and inconsiderable to be laid before the Principal, and Partners of his Power. Others there are, which are referr'd to neither, as there are proper officers appointed to judge them. This regular and subordinate distribution of authority prevents that confusion, which a multitude of offenders, and a multiplicity of offences would otherwise occasion. But this is not the subordination which you insist on.

Whether the Tutors of *Oxford* will submit to be catechiz'd and taught their duty at 40, or 50, I cannot say. All I know is, that such institutions are not calculated for the Meridian of *Cambridge*, where Nature and Art are not so desperately backward, and slow in their advances. Upon the whole, therefore, I am not without hopes, that the same candor and ingenuity which led you to retract a part of your charge, will prevail with you to efface the whole of it.

Thus, Sir, have I thrown together without method or order, (perhaps you will think them thrown away) such reflections as occur'd to me on your Judgment of the
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Universities, and on your two revisions of the first Decree. If, in the *rapidity of composition*, heated as I am with the importance of the subject, any casual repetitions, or seeming contradictions, any little inaccuracies of stile, or trivial mistakes in point of reasoning, or of fact, should unluckily have escap'd me ; persuaded I am, no candid reader will take offence. I'm aware, indeed, some captious critic may be at me with a tale, ' A giddy, conceited thing comes into
 ' a room ;——runs up to the glass ;——
 ' turns about to the Lady of the house ;
 " Lard, Madam, I'm such a figure ! as I
 " hope to live, I'm quite asham'd ; but I
 " protest I was in such a hurry to be with
 " you, I would not give myself time to
 " put my Cloaths on. But you know ;
 " Ma'am, a friend will excuse ceremony ;
 " and I had something which I *must* tell
 " you,——little do you think *what* !"
 † This pretty precipitation of the *Slattern*,
 ' much resembles that of the *Author*. The
 ' *Public* is *his Friend* ; and as such, is
 ' bound to excuse all that's imperfect or un-
 ' finish'd, awkward, or defective.'——I
 knew what the *Moral* would be, but if so

much *ceremony* is requir'd, this I know, that the *Public* and I must never be acquainted. The trouble of *dress*ing, were I possess'd of the talent, would overcome my ambition, and for ever deter me from coming into view. But, luckily for me, the Muses have assum'd the modish *Negligeé*. Otherwise, the thickest shades of peaceful obscurity would hit my fancy better, than the dear-bought splendor of the learned drudge. This humour indeed should not be indulg'd by those who are better qualified for the service of mankind, and whose services must be lost, did they not greatly submit to the toil of composition, and the tax to envy. You have done both. And whatever the *Hornets* may buzz in the spirit of opposition and hostility, I maintain that your work is not a whit the worse for a few errors and obliquities, as *Damsels* are not deem'd the less beautiful for *squinting* a little.

But as men are dispos'd to imitate most, those whom they most admire; and as that graceful *negligence* so hard to be caught, and so conspicuous in you, might in others de-
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generate into downright *slovenliness*, I own
I am for binding *them* down to those old
formal and musty rules, which logicians, cri-
tics, and grammarians have invented and
framed, for the purposes of order, per-
spicuity, and truth.

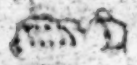
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convert into downright nonsense. I own
I am for binding down to those old
formal and much used logical, cri-
tic, and grammatical rules invented and
founded for the purposes of order, pre-
cision, and truth.



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